

REMARKS

These remarks follow the order of the paragraphs of the office action. Relevant portions of the office action are shown indented and italicized.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-24 are pending.

Drawings

1. *The drawings are not of sufficient quality to permit examination. Figures 7, 15-16 and 19-20 are objected because the shading reduces the legibility of the legends and makes the figures difficult to read in electronic form. Accordingly, replacement drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to this Office action. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action.*

Applicant is given a THREE MONTH time period to submit new drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.81. Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). Failure to timely submit replacement drawing sheets will result in ABANDONMENT of the application.

A clean legible set of the drawings is included herewith. Figures 7, 15-16 and 19-20 are labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the respective page header of these sheets.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. *The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 1 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:*

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made. Claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-15, 18-22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vaeth et al. (6,308,277) in view of Kobata et al. (6,591,367).

3. a) As to claims 1, 10, 18,20-22 and 24, Vaeth discloses a method and system for issuing and managing certificates in the field of telecommunications, particularly in electronic commerce (col. 1, lines 10-13) comprising the steps of a proof service provider transmitting a certificate generation request to a witness or a certificate generator (col. 6, lines 19-20); the witness or the certificate generator generating a certificate (col. 6, line 21).

Vaeth does not disclose the step of the witness or certificate generator obtaining electronic content upon the receipt of the certificate generation request from the service provider.

Kobata discloses a method and apparatus for transmitting digital information over a network (col. 1, lines 1-2) comprising receiving system obtains digital information from a server system (Fig. 1; col. 3, lines 21-43; col. 4, lines 6-49). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to employ the use of obtaining contents electronically as Kobata teaches in the system of Vaeth so as to save transmission bandwidth.

b) As to claims 2, 7 and 11, Vaeth discloses the certificate includes the electronic content or data which is a hash code that uniquely represents the electronic content (Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 35-41).

c) As to claims 3 and 12, Vaeth discloses the method further comprising the step of accumulating the certificate in the service provider or transmitting the certificate to a user (col. 8, lines 49-51).

d) As to claims 5, 14 and 19, Vaeth discloses the step of generating the certificate includes a step of providing a signature for the certificate and wherein the signature step includes a first configuration process consisting of a first signature step by the witness or the certificate generator and a second signature step by the service provider (col. 4, lines 43-47) or a second configuration process consisting of a signature step by a notary service provider.

e) As to claims 6 and 15, Vaeth discloses the signature is encrypted using a public key encryption method to prevent alteration by a person other than a signer (col. 2, lines 16-67; col. 3, lines 1-13; lines 35-40).

f) As to claim 8, Vaeth discloses the method wherein in accordance with a request from the user, the certificate generation request is transmitted to the witness or the certificate generator on one or multiple dates or is transmitted continuously during one or multiple specific periods (col. 6, lines 1-6).

g) As to claim 9, Vaeth discloses the method wherein synchronization of time is effected between the service provider and the witness or the certificate generator (Fig. 2, elements 80 and 90).

4. Claims 16 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 1 03(a) as being unpatentable over Vaeth et al. (6,308,277) in view of Um (6,728,884). Vaeth discloses Vaeth discloses a method and system for issuing and managing certificates in the field of telecommunications, particularly in electronic commerce (col. 1, lines 10-13) comprising means for accepting and for analyzing a service request received from a user (Fig. 2, element 75); means for transmitting a certificate generation request to the witness or the certificate generator that is selected (Fig. 2, element 81); means for accepting a certificate from the witness or from the certificate generator (Fig. 2, element 83); means for transmitting the certificate to the user (Fig. 2, element 77). Vaeth does not disclose means for selecting a witness or a certificate generator from a registered member group. Um discloses a method and apparatus for selectively authenticating and authorizing a client seeking access to one or more protected computer systems over a network comprising means for selecting a name that corresponds to a proxy server from the plurality of proxy servers to authenticate user (col. 9, lines 58-67 to col. 10, lines 1-5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to employ the use of selecting a certificate generator or witness i.e proxy server from a plurality of proxy servers as Um teaches in the system of Vaeth so as to guarantee the randomness and fairness in authenticating and authorizing users.

5. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 1 03(a) as being unpatentable over Vaeth et al. (6,308,277) in view of Um (6,728,884) and further in view of Kohl et al. (6,430,688). Vaeth further discloses means for accepting the certificate, however Vaeth and Um do not include means for providing an electronic signature to the certificate. Kohl discloses a method, apparatus, article of manufacture and a memory structure for issuing digital certificates to a client comprising digital signatures incorporate into a certificate (col. 5, lines 37-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to employ the use of incorporating digital signatures into a certificate as Kohl teaches in the system of Vaeth and Um so as to ensure the authenticity.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 4 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior arts do not teach the certificate includes address information for the electronic content.

Although applicant does not agree that the invention in the claims are made obvious by Vaeth et al. (6,308,277), with or without Kobata et al. (6,591,367), and/or Um (6,728,884), in order to

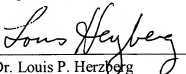
advance the prosecution of this application, the limitation of objected-to claim 4 (and claim 13) is added to claim 1, 10, 16, 18 and 20, and claims 4 and 13 are canceled.

It is anticipated that this amendment brings the application to allowance of claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-24. Favorable action is respectfully solicited. In the unlikely event that any claim remains rejected, please contact the undersigned by phone in order to discuss the application.

Please charge any fee necessary to enter this paper to deposit account 09-0468.

Respectfully submitted,

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